

Claims 1, 6, 7, 12 and 16 were objected to because of informalities. Applicant has amended these claims and therefore respectfully requests that this objection also be withdrawn.

Claims 1-11 and 15-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,990,918 ("Baxendale") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,897,533 ("Lyszczarz"). For at least the reasons set forth below, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of the above enumerated claims.

Baxendale relates to a method of printing a security image on a layer of clear plastics material which forms a protective layer on a card such as a credit card.

Lyszczarz relates to a method for applying a metal film to the surface of one side of a credit card and for applying a protective layer over it. (Column 1, lines 43-51). The protective layer is entirely transparent. (Column 2, lines 64-66). Additionally, graphics may be printed directly onto the surface of the metal film using ultraviolet curable ink. (Column 2, lines 15-19). The presence of the metal film is to make the card more attractive. (Column 1, lines 20-24 and 48-49). The protective layer may be implemented using a clear, ultraviolet curable varnish, or a clear film with heat activated adhesive. (Column 5, lines 30-43).

Baxendale and Lyszczarz fail to teach or even suggest, alone or in combination, "the substrate having at least one reflective region thereon, and selectively altering optical properties of portions of the plastics material so as to form an image therein", as recited in claim 1. Baxendale teaches changing the optical properties of a plastics material and creating an image in the plastics material itself, whereas Lyszczarz appears to simply teach having a metal film with graphics printed thereon for aesthetic purposes. In addition to the lack of a teaching or a suggestion, there is no suggestion or motivation to combine the references. See MPEP § 2143.01.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent claim 1 be withdrawn.

Further, independent claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baxendale in view Lyszczarz. Baxendale and Lyszczarz fail to teach or even suggest, alone or in combination:

- "optical properties of the plastics layer altered in at least the region overlying the reflective element", as recited in claim 16.

Baxendale teaches changing the optical properties of a plastics material and Lyszczarz appears to simply teach having a metal film on a credit card surface. Neither reference teaches or suggests altering optical properties of the plastics layer "in

at least the region overlying the reflective element", as recited in claim 16.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of independent claim 16 also be withdrawn.

Claims 2-10 and 15 depend from and further limit claim 1, and claims 17-20 depend from and further limit claim 16, and, for at least the reasons stated above in connection with claims 1 and 16 are patentable over Baxendale in view of Lyszczarz.

Claims 12-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baxendale as modified by Lyszczarz and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,688,056 ("Peyret"). For at least the reasons set forth below, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of the above enumerated claims.

Claims 12-14 depend from and further limit claim 1, and, for at least the reasons stated above in connection with claim 1 is patentable over Baxendale as modified by Lyszczarz and further in view of Peyret.

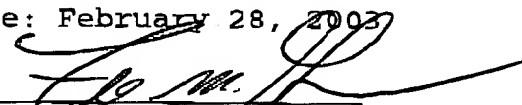
This communication is believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action and every effort has been made to place the application in condition for allowance. The claims, in view of the foregoing explanation, are believed to be patentable over the cited art, and a favorable Office Action is hereby earnestly solicited.

If a telephone interview would be of assistance in advancing prosecution of the subject application, Examiner is requested to telephone the number provided below.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment to 37 C.F.R. §1.121. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH CHANGES MARKED-UP

Please amend claims 1, 6, 7, 12 and 16 as follows:

--1. (AMENDED) A method of forming an image, comprising providing a layer of plastics material over a substrate, the substrate having at least one reflective region thereon, and selectively altering the optical properties of portions of the plastics material so as to form an image therein.

--6. (AMENDED) A method as claimed in claim 5, in which the heating elements are energized to deposit a continuous layer of the plastics material over the whole of the an area to be covered such that the plastics material serves as a protective coating.

--7. (AMENDED) A method as claimed in claim 6, in which selected regions of the plastics material are heated to a greater degree than other areas so as to vary the a surface appearance of the plastics layer.

--12. (AMENDED) A method as claimed in claim 1, in which the layer of plastics material is deposited on the substrate during a printing process, and in which the image to be formed in the plastics film layer is held in a memory device readable

by one of the printer and a data processor controlling the printer.

--16. (AMENDED) A printed item, said item having a substrate bearing on at least a portion thereof a reflective element and a plastics layer deposited over the substrate and the reflective element, the optical properties of the plastics layer altered in at least the region overlying the reflective element.